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Male Line of Descent

(1) *Bani 'Ám.* According to Shaikh Nahar al Mutalaqim of the 'Ajman, who discussed this with me on 11th August, 1935, the members of every tribe or section of a tribe which have a common male ancestry are known as Bani 'Ám, *lit.* the children of one uncle. The Mutair and 'Ajman are more strict than others about the interpretation of the above, he said, and carry it to the seventh generation of ascendants. Beyond that, he added, genealogies were rather vague. Only blood relationship on the father's side (*'Amam*) gives the right of Bani 'Ám or Ibn 'Ám, and not the relationship on the mother's side, which is known under the name of *Khawál.* 613 582

A man in trouble can always rely on his *'Amam* to come to his assistance. They must do this regardless of consequences—and so must a tribe which has such relationship with another, the 'Ajman-Murra tribes for instance. 613 614

The 'Ajman and Murra were continually at each other's throats in the past, and raided and counter-raided in merry fashion, but when an outside enemy attacked the one, all private feuds were put aside, and the two united in resisting the attack. The reason was that they were descended from the common ancestor Yam and so were *Bani 'Ám.*

The families of Ibn Sa'ud, Ibn Subah, Ibn Khalifa and Abal Khail of Qassim are all *Bani 'Ám,* and so can always be counted on, in any serious difficulty, to come to one another's help. They are all 'Anizah, descended from the same distant ancestor.

A man's *Khawál,* his maternal relations, are of course useful, especially in offering sanctuary, but they are not under the same obligations as a man's *Bani 'Ám.*

'Amam al rajál, aẓam min khawálu is a well-known saying. This explains happenings which sometimes mystify the European. A man marries a woman from another tribe; she proves unfaithful (the instance I am describing has to my knowledge happened among 'Arabdar and Hadhar persons of Kuwait), the husband does not seem to mind much, but hints to the wife's *'Amam* that she is not all that she should be. They, being her *Bani 'Ám,* kill her, but do not enlist the outraged husband. She is slain to clear the family's good name, and to enable them to hold up their heads in the *mijlis arjal,* or counsels of men. Should a couple have children, a son and a daughter, and the daughter happens to disgrace the family, then either the 613 627 604 593

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father or the son (the girl's brother) has to kill her to wipe out the dishonour. If her father is dead and she has no brother, then her *walad 'ám*, a male cousin on her father's side, must take action and do the deed.

Between *bani 'ám* certain actions are taboo. For instance, a man must never seize and bind one of his *'amam* even though he be a thief. Nor must he, if on the warpath, attack his *'amam* by a *dawn* attack or raid him after *midnight*. It is *'aib* (disgraceful) to do this.

Between *bani 'ám* the generally agreed price of a man killed (*'idiya*) is fixed at 50 camels, a man, and a rifle. The payment of these settles the blood feud. Should an outsider, however, slay a man there is a different scale, and should he kill an important shaikh such as the Al Subah, Al Sa'ud, Al Dushan, Al Sha'alan, then only blood can expiate the crime. (See Chapter XLII.)

WALAD 'ÁM

(2) *Walad 'Ám*—father's brother's son (first cousin—male on father's side).

BINT 'ÁM

(3) *Bint 'Ám*—father's brother's daughter (first cousin—female—on father's side). See also Chapter VIII.

A man always has the right to marry his *bint 'ám*, and no man, not even his parents or the girl's parents, can deny him this right.

Should he voluntarily forgo it, he will give the girl a paper, saying that he does not want her. The whole idea of this first-cousin marriage is protective, and is designed to keep the family intact. A girl knows from earliest childhood that her future husband will be her *walad 'ám*. She cannot evade such marriage unless her cousin waives his right or allows another man to purchase this right from him. This latter procedure is not common.

On the whole, this first-cousin marriage works well. It at least insures a girl a husband, as soon as she comes of age to marry. Among more civilised Arabs it has led to much abuse, and brothers have prevented their sisters marrying lest they take property out of the immediate family. This fraternal tyranny has frequently been exercised among the Al Sa'adun shaikhs in Iraq.